

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE KIDS

April 2001

Lassen Children & Families Commission Newsletter

Volume 2, Issue 3

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First Mini-Grants Awarded

The Lassen Children & Families Commission is pleased to announce the awarding of four mini-grants. Funding for mini grants is available to projects that are focused in three distinct areas: (1) Improved Child Health: Healthy Children; (2) Improved Family Functions: Strong Families, and (3) Improved Child Development: Children Learning and Ready for School.

Mountain Midwifery has been awarded a mini-grant to provide a new service to the women of Lassen County. Under the supervision of Ellie Orbeton, C.N.M., this project will train ten volunteers and create a Doula service for pregnant women. Doula is a Greek word meaning "in service of". Today the concept of a Doula refers to a "woman experienced in childbirth who 'Mothers the Mother' by providing continuous physical, emotional and informa-

tional support before, during and just before childbirth". Studies have shown that when a Doula is present at a birth, there are less interventions and better outcomes for the baby. This service fulfills the intent of Prop 10 to prepare all California children to enter school healthy and ready to learn by giving each child the very best of beginnings. The Lassen Children & Families Commission is excited to participate in bringing this innovative idea to our community. In the words of Ms. Orbeton, "Doula unto others as you would have them Doula unto you."



Mini-Grant recipients (from left to right): Linda Pack, Susanville Library; Ellie Orbeton, Mountain Midwifery; Jennifer Audette, Susanville Preschool; and Heather Del Carlo.

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The Susanville Preschool was awarded a mini-grant to upgrade their current equipment and materials. The Susanville Preschool is a Parent / Teacher Co-Operative that has been in existence for over thirty years,

helping and teaching parents and their children in a pre-school / pre-kindergarten environment. On a limited budget they have provided for the continued growth and development of Lassen County's children. This mini-grant will allow the preschool to purchase a variety of indoor and outdoor educational and play resources. It will also allow the Susanville Preschool to upgrade their office equipment. Jennifer Audette, President of the Susanville Pre-school, is thrilled at the prospect of modernizing their pre-school and extends a grateful thank you to the Lassen Children and Families Commission for this opportunity.

The establishment of a preschool/day care center in the Richmond School area was the recipient of another mini-grant. Currently there are no pre-schools and limited child care resources serving this area. This center under the direction of Heather Del Carlo will fill a great void. Mrs. Del Carlo brings many years experience along with exciting new ideas to this program. This center will provide care for children ages 3 and 4, along with providing them with enhanced educational growth and development opportunities. Additionally, night time care will be provided. This resource is appreciated greatly by the correctional employees who are required to work night shifts.

The Susanville Library District will use the mini-grant awarded them to add new pre-school children's books and computer software to their children's collection. Reading is the foundation of education and good reading materials are vital for children and parents. The target population for the library is pre-school children, many of whom come from an economically disadvantaged population where books and computers are often not available at home. The grant funds will allow the library to improve the selection available in their "Children's Corner. This is a place where children and their caregivers can read together and learn with books and computers. Additionally the grant will enhance the Families for Literacy Program serving the reading needs of pre-school children whose parents are involved in the Literacy Program. The Lassen Children & Families Commission is excited to be involved in this project.

"One of the most obvious facts about grownups to a child is that they have forgotten what it is like to be a child."

Randall Jarrell



State of California School Readiness 2001 Initiative



The School Readiness 2001 Initiative is being developed by a Task Force that includes representatives from California Children & Families Commission, Secretary of Education, Health and Human Services Agency, Governor's Office, Department of Finance, and three County prop. 10 Commissions. The purpose of the School Readiness Initiative is to improve the ability of families, schools, and communities to prepare children to enter school ready to succeed. This will be accomplished through start-up and implementation incentive grants to County Prop. 10 Commissions that may fund approximately 50 locally tailored School Readiness Centers/Programs in communities served by low-performing schools. The cornerstone of the School Readiness Initiative will be local School Readiness Centers/Programs that restructure and coordinate the delivery of quality early care and education, health and social services, parental education and support, plus improve schools' readiness for children through family-friendly environments in school-based or school-linked settings. While based on research, each county program will be designed to be responsive to local needs. The Initiative will be supported by a campaign to educate the public about the availability of 'school readiness' resources and what the standards and expectations are for early education and kindergarten, and by the development of research-based School Readiness assessments for children and schools.



Through the School Readiness Centers/Programs, California's communities will link early care and education settings to neighborhood school sites, as well as provide services at or near schools or through outreach or mobile strategies. The key is to create a locally viable, research-based education, service, and communication system among early care and education settings, neighborhood schools and community agencies so children and families have a positive transition to elementary education and schools and communities have increased capacity to ensure young students' success.



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Surfing the Net?



Catch us at
www.ccfc.ca.gov/lassen

Coming Events

The Lassen Children and Families Commission meets on the first Thursday of each month at the

Barry Creek Meeting Center
1345 Paul Bunyan Road, Suite B
Susanville, California 96130

Remaining meeting dates for 2001

May 3, 2001
June 7, 2001
July 5, 2001
August 2, 2001
September 6, 2001
October 4, 2001
November 1, 2001
December 6, 2001